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Apex

Looking Through The Curve

Official newsletter of Bluegrass Beemers, Inc. Lexington, Kentucky
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HAVE A GREAT & SAFE 4TH OF JULY!

Sixth Annual Café Run

Photos and text by John Rice

The idea for the Café Run began many years ago with a story by Peter Egan (January 1998, *Cycle World* column).

Sometimes ideas take a while to percolate in the dim recesses of my mind.

It occurred to me that there were motorcycle events nearly every weekend in the summer but that most of them were some variety of the same thing. There were Poker Runs, charity rides and memorial rides, nearly all of which involved some sort of group ride and nearly all were aimed mainly at the cruiser riders of the motorcycling world.

I'm of the age that grew up with the notion of Café Racers, the minimalist bikes of the late 50's and 60's that were modified for speed on the twisting back roads of Britain and for looks on the "form follows function" idea. I didn't see any events targeted at bringing out the old bikes, the interesting bikes, the ones really individualized by their owner's vision of what a motorcycle should be.

The Café Run would be a free event, no entry fee and no prizes. It would not be a group ride, at least not in the organized sense, but people would be free to group together if they wished. It's not a race....there is no time for leaving or arrival, so each rider would set his or her own speed.

Riders would gather at the first Café to do what riders always do, check out the machines, talk bikes and eat. The other end would be at another

café, where the same thing would happen naturally. Finding the Village Café (with great pie) right across the street from a fantastic motorcycling destination, The Kickstand, made it perfect. Various routes were mapped out to give riders the choice of a direct route, a scenic route and a longer, more curvy scenic route to get there. The first few years worked out well, even with some rain on occasion. Then the city of Winchester put the Beer Cheese Festival on the same weekend. They didn't even ask me first!

Rain and Beer Cheese....not usually associated with successful motorcycle events. For the Sixth Annual Café Run, two hours before the kickoff time of 10 AM, the skies over Winchester opened up and rain poured down by the buckets-full. The previous evening, I'd checked the newspaper and found that, because of the success of last year's Beer Cheese Festival the city had closed off even more roads to allow for more vendors. Now most of the roads I'd used in giving directions to the site were blocked. I went out in the rain and put up more directional signs to circumvent the blockages.

I checked the weather radar and saw solid green over Louisville, Cincinnati and Ashland, three of the places that have in the past provided many of our riders.

At 8:30 two local friends came by with their bikes, parked in the lot and went to peruse the Festival booths. By 9 AM, the rain had stopped but I was wondering if anyone else would show up, and if they did,

could they find the place.

We had a "new" venue this year, the same location but a new café owner who had gamely agreed to carry on the tradition.

The Colonel's Lady Café is modeled after a Victorian tea-room and features not only an astonishing variety of specialty teas (she even keeps three different water heating devices, because some teas respond better to certain temperatures) but also excellent food and the only



Ken Perry's R1100RT



Seven riders followed Lowell Roark from Frisch's.



H.C. Morris, owner of the finest collection of vintage Triumphs in the USA, came this time on four wheels, but true to form, a classic set of four.

Sixth Annual Café Run

Photos and text by John Rice



Riders enjoyed scones, pie, tea and coffee among breakfast offerings in The Colonel's Lady Café.

authentic English style scones I've ever experienced on this side of the Big Pond. A truly marvelous place, but new to the experience of Café Runs.

Dawn Little, the proprietor, assured me that she'd have whatever we needed, including the necessary pie.

At 9:30, the first out of town bikes rolled in, Kenneth Perry and his son, followed soon thereafter by Lowell Roark and a group from breakfast.,

H.C. Morris, owner of the



The Lexington Triumph Club arrived in full force.

finest collection of vintage Tri-

umphs in the USA, came this time on four wheels, but true to form, a classic set of four.

The Lexington Triumph club arrived in full force.

Including our only solo female rider for this Run, Cheryl Greer, on her 250 Ninja.

Our Editor arrived, and Grandson Ian, still a tad too young to ride in by himself, got into the Run.

Walneck's Classic Cycle Trader magazine had sent two boxes of the current issue to

give away, providing break fast reading material and dream-fodder for those looking for another bike for next year's run.

By noon, the last bikes had left Winchester, headed for The Kickstand at Burgin. Brenda and grandson Ian went to retrieve the signs, and I mounted the Green Bike for a quick run south.

When I arrived in Burgin, the lot was overflowing and lunch was well underway at the Village Café across the street.

I lost count of the bikes at the Winchester end, but I know that more than 40 were there at last tally. I think even more showed up at the far end.

Next year I may change the date to avoid coinciding with the Beer Cheese festival, just so more people can find the place without the challenge of closed streets. If you'd like the two events to continue to share downtown, let me know.

Our only solo female rider for this Run was Cheryl Greer on her 250 Ninja.

—John



Sixth Annual Café Run

Photos and text by John Rice



Grandson Ian, still a tad too young to ride in by himself, got into the Run.



In the true individualist spirit of the Run, Jay Smythe made the trip from Lexington to Winchester to Burgin on a 250 dual sport bike.



Lynn Montgomery had been called away from the counter at the Kickstand and pressed into temporary waitress duty at the café to keep the iced tea orders coming.



An exotic "modern" cafe racer, a four cylinder two stroke, courtesy of Paul Huber.



Café Run, June 18th



4 5 or so motorcycles, and who knows how many enthusiasts, assembled at the Colonel's Lady Restaurant on Main Street in Winchester for the annual Care Run sponsored by John Rice Law.

Attendees received a t-shirt and copy of the latest *Wal-neck's* magazine which carried the ad for the event.

Organizer John Rice provided two twisty routes to The Kickstand in Burgin from which riders could choose for the run. Riders departed individually or in small groups throughout the morning following tire-kicking and fantastic break fast treats and coffee at Colonel's Lady.

As in previous years, threatening weather encouraged riders to mount later-model motorcycles in greater number than the vintage rides, but that didn't matter as a wide variety of motorcycles and engaging riders were on hand to celebrate what we have in common.

In Burgin at The Kickstand, we shopped in Ray and Lynn's unique store and enjoyed lunch at the Village Restaurant across the street from The Kickstand.

Thank you, John Rice and Ray and Lynn Montgomery for providing another excellent event!

—Paul Elwyn



**Café
Run
2011**





**Café
Run
2011**





Ian Rice (above), an advancing trials rider, watched Winchester Motor Officer Eric Scaggs demonstrate full-lock turns on his 2008 Harley-Davidson police unit.

"Look where you want to go," advises Officer Scaggs.

Eric is one of three motor officers on motorcycle duty in Winchester.

Officer Scaggs also demonstrated how to pick up a 1000-pound motorcycle.

Winchester police motor officer Eric Scaggs demonstrated slow-speed motorcycle control.



Café Run 2011



Left: Cheryl Greer with her 250 Ninja
Above: Clyde Austin on his Triumph Bonneville





**Café
Run
2011**





**Café
Run
2011**





Table-top model of the Café Run by Ian Rice

Bluegrass Beemers Random Images

By Tom Weber



Bluegrass Beemers Random Images By Tom Weber



Go West Young Bike

(Or, How Paul's Bike Finds a New Home In Hawaii) Part 3



By Bob Beard

Okay, where was I?

In Part One of this ongoing melodrama/saga I have taken you through the process of settling on, negotiating with, and agreeing to buy Paul's R100 (which actually started life as an R100RT, but that was then and this is now. And, if you want to agree to make it an R100 instead of an R100RT then we may as well go ahead and call it an R100S now. Life changes; deal with it).

And in Part Two I yakked interminably about the painful process and difficulties of packing for a motorcycle trip without benefit of a motorcycle to place the goodies onto.

Now.....freaking finally, I am winging to the North American continent to pick up the bike and begin bringing it back to its hopefully-maybe-possibly final home in the state of Hawaii.

The flight: What can anyone possibly say about a modern day flight that did not include fire, storm, undue turbulence, drunken passengers, hijacking,

sleeping pilots, etc...? Not much.

You get into a huge metal tube at your departure area and find out, once again, that during the next eight or nine hours the gigantic flying tube of metal continually contracts and shrinks until it reaches dimensions so excruciatingly tiny that by the time your destination is reached this flying straight jacket actually begins to crush your soul.

Apparently this happens only to that section or sections rearward of the First Class areas. Within those particular seating areas not only is there no shrinkage, I hear tell there is also food, movies and drinks that appear without the necessity of flashing your debit card about.

Legroom, elbow room, warm towels and heated nuts also can be procured, if not at the snap of a finger, then at least by the barest soft spoken request. So I hear.

Back where I sit there are a myriad number of discontinued "free" services:

- Things to nosh are non-existent unless you swipe a credit/debit card.
- Movies for watching are woefully wanting....unless you swipe a credit/debit card.
- Intoxicating beverages, that simple soporific of the common creature, are ultimately unobtainable..... unless you swipe a credit/debit card.

Considering all the things that used to be included within the price of an airline ticket that now are not, my imagination conjures up a scenario whereby

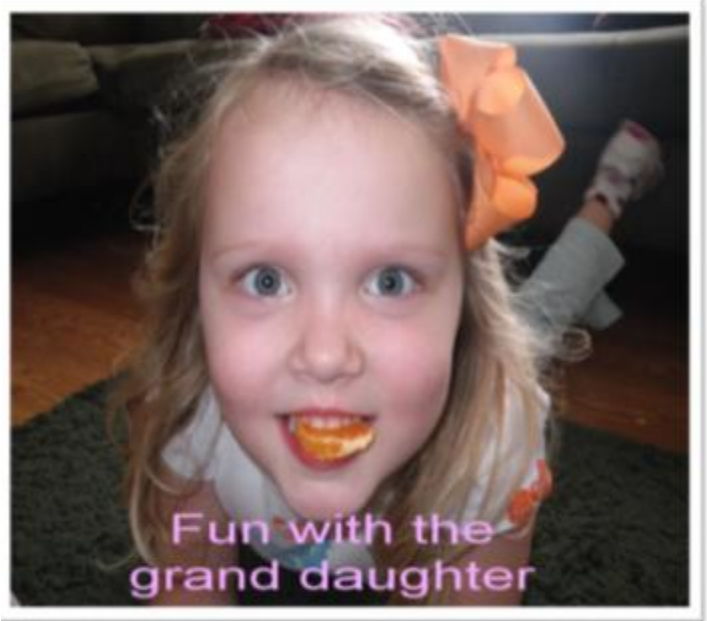
we unexpectedly lose cabin pressure, oxygen masks drop from the ceiling like plasticized spiders, and all that is required to start the flow of life-giving gasses is a firm downward pull.....and a swipe of a credit/debit card.

I startle awake from this dreamed scenario, wipe the drool from my cheek and discover I have an urgent need to urinate.

The plane is semi-dark, those who can actually afford airline food have eaten, and the rest of us are semi-comatose with boredom. All I need to do to make my way to the restroom is to wake up the gigantic fat man next to me, then the woman-with-thankfully/finally-sleeping-infant-on-lap next to him, communicate the merely slightly embarrassing knowledge to them that I need to pee, have them unbuckle, stand up and move out into the aisle so I can get out, and then eventually reverse the process once I am done relieving myself.

Or I can grit my teeth until we land, which, considering we have been in-flight for at least several lifetimes, should only be in about (quick glance at my watch) 428 minutes. I am in hell.

FINALLY, after a brief lay-over in Chicago (3 hours....I got kicked out of the kids' play area twice) I am in Kentucky. Youngest daughter-unit Teri and granddaughter Lorelei are there to greet me. Teri is just glad to see me, or is glad to see me because now she has an adult to talk to during the day while my son-in-law is at work. Lorelei is glad to see me because I will read anything she puts in front of me, I will play every board game she owns three times in a row if she wants, and she is of an age where she has also figured out that grandparents at airports tend to have new toys in their pockets.



Go West Young Bike

(Or, How Paul's Bike Finds a New Home In Hawaii) Part 3 By Bob Beard

One of the first things I notice about being back in the heart-land is that it is COLD! To coin that all-encompassing phrase so popular with teen-age girls, "Oh My God!!" Sure, it is not snowing or anything, and there is no frozen water in sight, but it is about 11 degrees above freezing, it is gray and windy and drizzly and dank.

I am shivering before we are ten steps out of the terminal. I have rubbed this in your face before, but it does bear repeating: Mary and I live in Hawaii. I have become undeniably and completely comfortable within that 10 degree window of temperature variation that we endure on a season-to-season basis. Any temps that fall outside of that small 75 to 85 degree variation is a venture into extremes that I am not accustomed to.

Laugh if you will, but I suffer for a few days until my metabolism hears the news and gets with the program. Daughter Teri assures me that had I arrived just last week it was glorious, sunny and in the high 70's. I think she just wants to make me squirm.

Back to my daughter's house and I pass several days playing with Thomas the Train Engine, watching Pixar's version of Hercules, and camping out in Lorelei's room.

Some of the goods I sent ahead have arrived so I air out my boots, jacket and riding pants, and re-insert all the armor. I had ordered some new cold weather riding gloves from BMG (British Motorcycle Gear) and a single person backpacking tent and they have both arrived.

Lorelei and I pulled out the new goods to inspect and play with. The gloves are large gauntleted affairs and I had great fun putting them on and chasing Lorelei around the house while doing my best imitation of the opening line from the Black Sabbath song Iron Man.

The tent had a first-attempt set up in the living room and for the rest of my stay it was reassembled in Lorelei's room where she and I "camped out". Nothing like spending a week sleeping on the floor while being kidney kicked by a loving 4

We pulled up into Paul's driveway and were greeted by his huge, friendly nose-in-crotch dog. Down boy! Nice doggie. I had never heard Paul mention this dog. Oh, well.

Several minutes of knocking on the door and hello-ing around the sides of the house showed not one trace of Mr. Elwyn, so I called him back to let him know we were here, hoping we were not pulling him off the toilet.

As it turns out either Paul or I cannot distinguish the difference between someone saying 812 and 912 over the phone. I

out of the way to get to the bike..... you get the idea.

Anyway, the bike looked good. Paul and Roy and various other suppliers of parts, work and advice did a fine job here. Way to go Mr. Elwyn!

Paul, conscientious kind of guy that he is immediately began giving me the low down on all the faults of the bike. I heard nothing that made me want to cancel the deal and run away.

A quite-brief warm up and an equally brief ride made me feel pretty good about life. There is some old west wisdom that basically says when buying a horse that you are not familiar with, it is better to look to the seller than the horse. Paul was his usual willing and helpful kind of guy, answering all my questions, even those I did not ask. He also hoped I brought enough warm duds for the ride. He also assured me that had I arrived just last week it was glorious, sunny and in the high 70's. Déjà Vu all over again.

Once it was certain that I still wanted to bike, I pried Paul's reluctant fingers off of it for the last time and we headed down to the motor vehicle department in Danville. Paul had called the previous day to grease the skids and we both figured it would be a process of someone telling us to sign here.....and here.....and here, etc... There might be a couple dollars bandied about for paperwork, and then we would be on our merry way.

Well, what is it that they say about assuming? We did get a bit of a jolt when the nice lady at the counter, upon learning that I was from Hawaii, told us in no uncertain terms they



year old.

This was all lots of fun, but I had come to procure a new-to-me motorcycle and under my calm veneer I was chomping at the bit to go and pick it up.

About three days into the scenario I got hold of Paul and my daughter drove me down to Danville to complete the transaction. I gave Paul a call along the way to verify that we were on our way, verify his address, get last minute detailed directions, etc.....Easy enough to find.

am putting my money on Paul, but I am man enough to admit that it *could* have been me.

Back in the car we say goodbye to nose-in-crotch dog and drive that half a block to Paul's real house. And as soon as we pull in the drive I can see the bike in Paul's garage. I emerged from the car, shook Paul's hand warmly and made lengthy introductions to both my daughter and granddaughter.....Okay, maybe I leapt from the car abandoning my progeny and shoved Paul

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could not transfer the title to me.

Both Paul and I did manage to refrain from blurting out anything like, "What the Hell are you talking about?" Good restraint on our part, I thought.

Basically she made it sound like Paul could not sell his vehicle to any out-of-state buyer, which we knew could not possibly be correct, but once you start down the slippery path of bureaucracy it is sometimes hard to backtrack. We soon got that straightened out and went back at Paul's house where it was time for him to say goodbye to his hobby for the last two years. I had to wipe his nose for him, take him inside and get him a glass of warm milk, and then tuck him into bed with his blankie. Geez, he did not take this too well. Big baby.

Shake down time. A few days of riding around town, out on the local back roads and some highway time starts to give me a good idea of how the old bike feels, handles and runs. No major foibles rear their ugly head, and that is good. I tweak the set of the handlebars, levers, check plugs, oil levels all around, etc....and it is all as good as it is going to get.

May 8th, 2011. Mother's Day. Departure time. The weather, which had warmed appreciably during my time in Lexington, has degraded grievously. But I have to admit that while I was in Lexington I did have my share of people assure me that had I arrived just last week it was glorious, sunny and in the high 70's.

I awake at 4am to DENSE fog and 100 foot visibility. Heading out on Leestown road I leave the city lights of Lexington and find that a top safe speed is only about 35-40 mph.



I had envisioned taking route 127 northward, but with the R100 having an unfamiliar load combined with the wet-slick roads and low vis I opted to remain on broader avenues by taking Leestown to 421, etc.... I had donned rain gear while still within Lexington city limits and am glad of that move. Rain would not be any wetter, and it would probably be better visibility.

As the morning progresses I make my way ever steadily north westerly. I have some friends in Minnesota that I intend to visit. Minnesota in May is a fairly iffy objective; it could be 65 degrees and sunny, or it could be snowing and blowing. On my arrival in Lexington (which I had been assured was glorious, sunny and in the high 70's just the week before my arrival) Minnesota was getting down to about 22 degrees at night and only up to about 40-42 during the daylight hours. Not what I really consider camping and riding weather.

So initially I was going to head southish and hit up some friends in the Memphis area.

BUT (and that is one big BUT) floods, tornadoes and torrential rain was hitting in the south, and the northern part of the country actually began to experience days in the mid 60's. I can deal with mid 60's better than I handle washed out roads and 70 mph winds, so north I went.

Something I was going to find out in short order was that in 2011 the North American continent was experience an extremely wide range and variety of odd weather patterns. And I had planned my X-Country sojourn smack in the middle of the craziness.

On a nearly daily basis I had to change my plans and route to accommodate just about every known form of weather. I think the only item that I was not plagued or chased with was flaming hail. And while I never really got stuck in the midst of anything that put my life in danger, had this been the "good ol' days" back before cell

phones, internet communication, and the weather channel above the counter down at the gas-n-go, I would have been subject to a much harsher reality than what I actually wound up getting.

The fog continued unabated as I rolled (slowly) through Kentucky, north into the lower portion of Indiana. Somewhere just shy of Madison, Indiana as I put it into fourth gear (albeit at very low revs) I had a phantasm jump out of the fog **RIGHT THE HELL INTO MY PATH!!!** Jesus wept! I was only going about 35-40 mph and, Honest-to-God, some woman jumped right in front of me waving her arms and jumping up and down, and yelling something informative like, "Hoe Down, Taxidermist Head".

I do believe, thinking about it in retrospect, that what she really wanted to say was something like, 'Slow Down, there is an accident ahead.'

But I had earplugs in and was wearing a helmet behind an 'S' fairing, so it could be that I misheard. I was slowing down anyway (cause I tend to do that when I have the sudden urge to pull over, walk back, and slap the crap out of stupid people who needlessly endanger my life) when the fog started flashing in surges of red. Ooooooh, pretty.

Those red flashes were the result of EMS-type vehicles parked alongside the road: Fire trucks, ambulances and the like. As I slowed and approached there were three such vehicles stationed about with a mix of Sheriff's cars and maybe as many as twelve Emergency personnel standing around waving me through. I was the only idiot driver out in this fog soup so I cruised on past in second

Go West Young Bike

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gear, but passing through I noticed some skid marks leading straight off the road and pointing in the general direction of an overturned car lying off the side of the road.

Lying alongside (and somewhat beneath) the car was a human form. Male or female? I could not hazard a guess, but not only was this person not moving, there was also not one person attending to them. It was not until I was a hundred yards down the road before that fact registered in my fog and adrenaline charged nugget.

I can only surmise that the EMS personnel were not down there working on the person because there was nothing left to do. Whatever speed I was travelling at before coming upon the accident scene was certainly greater than the speed I continued on in. The menace of fog shrouded corners, slick pavement and imminent death grew suddenly larger in my mind.

It was not until about 1pm, sometime after I crossed into Illinois that the sun gained enough presence to poke through the mist. The temps, which had been hovering at what I guessed was about 50 degrees jumped up into the lower 70's as verified by a bank thermometer. Off came the rainsuit.

I dawdled in the parking lot of a mini mart and soaked up some warmth and let the sun do its thing on my damp self as I gassed up, checked load, tire pressure, oil level, etc.....prolonging my solar experience.

After warming up, gassing up, and drying off a bit I got back on the road and continued mostly westward. One of the first things I noticed upon getting underway again is that the

fog had done me a bit of a favor. The new gloves I was wearing, some BMG (British Motorcycle Gear) units, are well made insulated leather cool-weather units. Nicely constructed, and pretty comfy while chasing my grand daughter around the house, but as new leather garments tend to be they were fairly stiff and had a bit of breaking in to do before they would "fit like a glove".

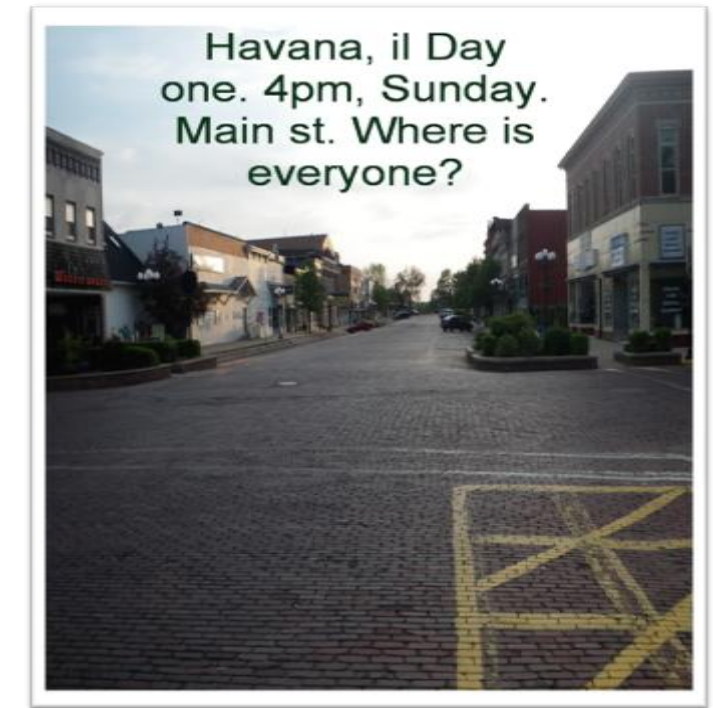
The hours I had spent with my hands in the fog-wetted breeze had made them soften up considerably, and now, as the day's humidity lowered they were drying out gently and much more in the shape of my hands.

The second thing I noticed was that twisty blacktop is a lot more fun when the sun is straight overhead, the road is dry, the day is long and there is no real destination in mind except for that next corner.

By late afternoon I had opened some vents in my jacket to let a bit of breeze in and found out that the ride-off center stand is a very cool item, but it can remove months-at-a-time from your life if you do not take the time to push it ALL the way up before hitting the corners.

The sun, which had been so welcome when it finally emerged from the fog eventually lowered itself down into my line of vision letting me know that the day was getting on and that I should think about somewhere to stay for the night. That somewhere turned out to be Havana, Illinois. This is a small river town that had the benefit of a little public campground along the riverfront just a few hundred yards out of the town proper.

I met the ubiquitous campground host, which in this case



was a couple of 60-something twin ladies in a fifth wheel camper (Hattie and Pattie or some such cuteness), paid my \$5 fee and asked the ladies how the weather had been. They assured me that had I arrived just last week it was glorious, sunny and in the high 70's, but that there was supposed to be some colder weather and maybe some rain moving in that night. Well, of course there would be, wouldn't there?

After tenting up I strolled into town to stretch my legs and see what was what. Weirdness abounding. I saw some cars parked, and maybe two cars drove by, and there was a lady working down at the gas station mini-mart, but other than that it seemed to be almost a ghost town. I mean it was 4pm on a Sunday afternoon and there was NOBODY around. Havana, Illinois is the place to go for a (very) quiet Sunday afternoon.

I grabbed some water and headed on back to my domicile-for-the-night and even Pattie

and Hattie, the twins, had disappeared into their camper. I was starting to get the feeling that this might be a good setting for a Steven King novel, but I braved the vampires, werewolves, aliens and axe murderers and lounged down by the river writing in my journal and watching the day disappear.

Not bad for a first day out. No bike problems, only one dead guy (or gal), and a spooky (but scenic) camp site.

The country was large; I had an open agenda, and a couple of weeks to get where I needed to be. Life was good.

In next month's issue I find out just exactly how good I am at dodging weather and adapting to changes of planning.



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Deadline for submissions is the last day of the month.

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Join us at Frisch's on Harrodsburg Rd. on any Saturday, 7-9:30 a.m.